

### ABSTRACT

An electronic mail file access system (100) and associated methods permit a person (102) who originates or maintains a file to allow a person (198) authorized to view or edit a file to access the file by transmitting an electronic message to the file accessor. The file manager can conveniently select whether the file accessor will be able to modify the file or just view it. A file manager can grant one or more accessors viewing or editing access to a file (or multiple files) through transmission of a common electronic message, or through transmission of a separate message for each file or accessor. Variations and methods with different advantageous features are also described.